



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **CALIFORNIA ESTABLISHES OFFICE OF SUICIDE PREVENTION**

SACRAMENTO (Calif.) – The California Department of Mental Health (DMH) announced today the establishment of the Office of Suicide Prevention. The event was held at the California Coalition for Youth, which serves as a suicide crisis call center for individuals in need of assistance. The Office of Suicide Prevention will implement strategies included in an upcoming statewide suicide prevention plan, and serve as a clearinghouse for best practices and research.

“Every day nine Californians die by suicide,” said Assembly Member Mary Hayashi. “The Office of Suicide Prevention is important as a coordinating office in the state working to prevent suicides.”

DMH Director Dr. Stephen Mayberg and Assembly Member Hayashi agree, establishing the Office of Suicide Prevention is a proactive and necessary approach to saving lives.

“As a co-founder of the Iris Alliance Fund and a member of the Suicide Prevention Plan Advisory Committee, Member Hayashi’s leadership has been invaluable in the suicide prevention movement,” Dr. Mayberg said.

“Governor Schwarzenegger’s leadership in commissioning the Suicide Prevention Plan Advisory Committee will provide California the direction needed to assist individuals at-risk of suicide.”

The Office of Suicide Prevention is funded through existing Mental Health Services Act (MHSA, Prop. 63) funds.

For more information regarding the Office of Suicide Prevention, please contact the DMH External Affairs division at (916) 654-2309.

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**Media Note:** Research has shown that certain ways of describing suicide in the news media can contribute to suicide contagion, popularly referred to as “copycat” suicides. **Guidelines for media reporting on suicide are available online at:** [www.afsp.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=home.viewpage&page\\_id=7852EBBC-9FB2-6691-54125A1AD4221E49](http://www.afsp.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=home.viewpage&page_id=7852EBBC-9FB2-6691-54125A1AD4221E49)